No Internationalism Without Nationalism

A National Bolshevist Essay

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I.

The bourgeois ideologues, liberals and fascists alike, want us to think that nationalism and internationalism are opposites. To the liberal, the nation is an obstacle to the free flow of capital and humanity; it dreams of melting all distinctive traits into a world free market. In contrast, the fascist fetishizes the nation as a racial idol, posed against all others in chauvinist enmity.

Both are wrong. Both deny the character of the nation. Both reduce internationalism to a caricature, for the liberal, [the nation is nothing but] a cosmopolitan marketplace for consumers; for the fascist, [the nation is nothing but] a frenetic battlefield with warring tribes.

The reality is that internationalism can exist but only within the context of an originating nationalism. The one is not without the other as body is not without Mind, form not without content.

II.

What is the Nation? The nation is not “race,” nor bloodline. It is the field of the real historical class fight where a people awakens to its own existence in class terms. It is the form of existence in and through which collective life is organised, in language, culture, territory, memory, labour, above all labour itself (that of struggle against oppression).

For the working class, the nation is not a fetish but a weapon. It is the battlefield on which the working class becomes powerful, organises itself and manifests/inscribes its will [upon the material world of action]. Without the national form, the proletariat would be an abstraction tending itself off in atomised existence. With it, it is a people-in-motion, an object of history.

III.

What is patriotic internationalism but the solidarity of free nations to resist imperialism and capital? But a people need to exist as conscious organised entities, for them to stand together.

Internationalism is not a dissolving of nations but the expansion of their unity in struggle.

Not the bazaar of liberal cosmopolitanism or the racial war of fascism. It is the combine of peoples, each with its local home, each shaping its own fate on majority lines at home, and seeing itself in the other through a common fight throughout.

So internationalism is an empty-sounding slogan without nationalism. Without internationalism, nationalism degenerates into chauvinism.

Nationalism is the shell; internationalism is the kernel.

They constitute together the weapon of the proletariat.

IV.

The Antifascist National Bolshevist Line

Fascism betrays nationalism. It brings the nation down to “race,” reducing it to exclusion, hatred. In the process, it returns the country to the bourgeoisie and disarms that most potent of weapons of the working class.

National Bolshevism, on the other hand, helms nationalism back to its revolutionary core: people's self-determination under leadership of the proletariat against imperialism, capitalism and exploitation. From this kind of Nationalism can develop real internationalism, the brotherhood of workers' nations not connected through the market but through common struggle.

Our line is clear:

Nationalism without chauvinism.

Internationalism without liberal erasure.

The country as the battlefield and the proletariat as its infantry.

V.

Nationalism and internationalism, [are] not enemies but dialectical poles. Both find their truth in the other. Nationalism unaccompanied by internationalism collapses into isolation; internationalism unaccompanied by nationalism evaporates into a void.

The proletariat is only a world power in the unity of its action. Brother/Sister only meets brother/Sister in dialectic and faces emancipation.

> Without Nationalism there can be no Internationalism.

If there is no Internationalism, Nationalism becomes inhuman.

Subsequently, [combined] they are the arm of rule of the organised proletariat.